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Message Text

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64
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20 RSR-01 /143 W
---------- 086404
R 141754Z AUG 73
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2540
INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

S E C R E T PARIS 21891

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EAID, VN, VS, FR
SUBJECT: QUAI VIEWS OF INDOCHINA SITUATION

1. SOUTH VIETNAM. QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR ASIA, BOLLE, SAID THAT FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN SAIGON HAD RECENTLY REPORTED ON A CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR MARTIN. US AND FRENCH VIEWS WERE BASICALLY SIMILAR AS CONCERNS SOUTH VIETNAM. THE THIUE GOVERNMENT WAS STABLE AND SEEMED IN SOLID CONTROL OF MOST OF THE IMPORTANT PART OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THERE WAS LITTLE PROGRESS IN THE PARIS TALKS, BUT THE MAJOR DISQUIETING FACTOR FOR THE GVN WAS THE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION. THE LACK OF CLEAR PROSPECTS FOR US AID WAS A SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. FRENCH RELATIONS WITH GVN HAD IMPROVED IMMEASURABLE, AND THE GVN WAS EVEN PERMITTING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FRANCE.

2. DRV. GOF AMBASSADOR TO HANOI REPORTED THAT THE DRV HAD MAJOR PROBLEMS OF REORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY, GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION AND THE REORIENTATION OF ATTENTION AND ENERGY TOWARD RECONSTRUCTION. (NOTE: FRENCH REPORT APPARENTLY ANTEDATED IMPLIED
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PUBLIC CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT BY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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STANDING COMMITTEE CONTAINED FBIS S 110 130 HANOI IN VIETNAMESE TO VIETNAM 2230 GMT 10 AUGUST 1973.) THE FRENCH HAD FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO GET THE SOVIETS TO TALK ABOUT INDOCHINA, BUT THE SOVIETS HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WERE TELLING THE DRV THAT THE JANUARY AGREEMENT SHOULD BE RESPECTED BY EVERYONE REPEAT EVERYONE. MOSCOW'S LINE WAS THAT THE VIETNAM AFFAIR WAS SETTLED AND THE LESS SAID ABOUT IT THE BETTER. THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT INDICATE TO WHAT DEGREE THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WEREACCEPTING THEIR ADVICE.

3. CAMBODIA. THE FRENCH CHARGE IN CAMBODIA WAS CALM. HE BELIEVED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO REAL BATTLE FOR PHNOM PENH. THERE COULD BE A COLLAPSE OF THE EXISTING STRUCTURE, A VACUUM INTO WHICH THE OTHER POWER WOULD MOVE, BUT THERE WAS AS YET NO INDICATION THAT THIS WAS IMMINENT. BOLLE THOUGHT THAT GVN INTERVENTION INTO CAMBODIA FOLLOWING COMMUNIST GAINS WOULD NOT IMPROVE THE SITUATION. ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM SAIGON, THIEU WAS AGAINST SUCH AN INTERVENTION DESPITE ADVICE FROM SOME QUARTERS THAT IT BE DONE. BOLLE SAID THAT THE GOF DID NOT CONSIDER THAT IT HAD BEEN SENT "A TELEGRAM" AS THE NCNA RELEASE FROM PEKING SEEMED TO SUGGEST (FBIS B111505 PEKING NCNA DOMESTIC SERVICE IN CHINESE 1237 GMT 11 AUGUST 1973). IT THEREFORE WOULD TAKE NO NOTE OF THE SIHANOUK WARNING TO REMOVE FRENCH EMBASSY PERSONNEL FROM PHNOM PENH.

4. LAOS. GOF REMAINS VERY HOPEFUL THAT SOUVANNA WILL BE ABLE TO BRING ABOUT THE SIGNING OF THE PROTOCOL, THE INVESTITURE OF THE NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT, AND THE LAUNCHING OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT ON A NEW COURSE WHICH WOULD PERMIT THE MAINTENANCE OF LAO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND THE REESTABLISHMENT OF LAO NEUTRALITY. THE GOF CONSIDERED SOUVANNA AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN THIS PROCESS; IF HE WERE TO VANISH, IT WOULD BE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SITUATION AND THE CHANCES OF ANY SUCCESS BY SOMEONE ELSE WOULD BE SLIGHT. ONLY SOUVANNA HAS THE SELF-CONFIDENCE AND PRESTIGE TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL APPEAL TO THE

NATIONALISTS ON THE COMMUNIST SIDE AND TO KEEP IN LINE THE RLG MILITARY AND OTHERS WHO ARE AFRAID OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS. IT WILL PROBABLY BE NECESSARY FOR

SOUVANNA TO REMAIN ON AS PRIME MINISTER FOR SEVERAL YEARS TO TURN THE WORDS OF THE AGREEMENT AND PROTOCOL INTO A WORKING SYSTEM. THE GOF ALSO HOPES THAT THE EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESS IN LAOS MAY ENCOURAGE SIMILAR EFFORTS

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IN THE GVN/PRG BILATERAL TALKS, AND EVEN IN TALKS AMONG
THE KHMER.
STONE

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